

OVERKILL

Once we'd ordered our meals I had to excuse myself to make a call. When I got back to the table my American friends were chuckling. "What's so funny?" They both looked me in the eye for a second, then had to look away. I felt strange. At last Jim quit giggling to say, "You been in Japan too long, man." "Says who?" "Says me." I demanded to know why and they went into more giggles. "I'm getting sick of this, Jim. Will you tell me what the fucking problem is? Will you quit laughing? People are staring at us." Jim summoned his composure. "The fucking problem is this, man. You're on the phone just now and I look up and you're fucking bowing, man. To a voice on the phone. A guy from Minneapolis and I look at you and there you are, bowing to a pay phone in Japan." Well. Maybe he had a point.

HAIKU

Five years to realize
I'll never have black hair, nor
brown eyes. Sad goodbyes.

-- William Marsh

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